

STRATEGY SCHOOLS

Modern Integrative Frameworks

Kim & Mauborgne · Martin · Lafley · Reeves

PAPER 04 / 04

A Furtherance reference compendium on the intellectual traditions behind organisational design, leadership, execution, and culture.

IN THIS PAPER

The series closes with the frameworks that make strategy usable – integrating position, resources and emergence into practical method. The question it answers: how does a leader actually choose a strategy, and how does the right approach depend on the environment?

Kim and Mauborgne reframe strategy as creating uncontested space; Martin casts it as a cascade of choices; Lafley proves that cascade at scale; Reeves shows there is no single right approach – the style must match the environment. Reeves, in effect, integrates the whole series.

Kim & Mauborgne *Blue Ocean Strategy*, 2005

Strategy · value innovation · INSEAD

CORE THESIS

Rather than fight in “red oceans” of head-to-head competition, create **blue oceans** – uncontested market space – through **value innovation**: breaking the trade-off between value and cost by reconstructing the boundaries of a market.

FRAMEWORK

Tool	What it does
Value innovation	Raise buyer value and lower cost at the same time
Four Actions (ERRC)	Eliminate, Reduce, Raise, Create factors of competition
Strategy canvas	Plot the value curve against rivals to find open space
Non-customers	Look to those the industry currently ignores

METHODOLOGY

Strategy research across many industries and historical cases of market creation.

SIGNIFICANCE AND CRITIQUE

A popular, actionable reframing away from competitive attrition toward market creation. The critique: the cases are chosen in hindsight, blue oceans eventually turn red, and imitation and execution are underplayed.

Roger Martin *Playing to Win*, 2013

Strategy as choice · integrative thinking

CORE THESIS

Strategy is an integrated **cascade of choices** about where to play and how to win – not a plan or a document. It is a set of coordinated bets under uncertainty, and good strategists practise **integrative thinking**, holding opposing models to forge a better one.

FRAMEWORK

Choice in the cascade	Question
Winning aspiration	What is our purpose – what does winning look like?
Where to play	Which markets, segments, channels, geographies?
How to win	What is our advantage there?
Capabilities	What must we be able to do to win?
Management systems	What supports and sustains the choices?

METHODOLOGY

A practitioner-academic framework, distilled from consulting and executive practice.

SIGNIFICANCE AND CRITIQUE

The clearest modern framework for strategy as choice, forcing hard, explicit decisions. The critique: the cascade is a logic for making bets, not a guarantee they are right.

A. G. Lafley *Playing to Win, 2013 · Procter & Gamble*

Strategy in practice · the choice cascade at scale

CORE THESIS

As chief executive, Lafley operationalised strategy-as-choice across a global company: a disciplined set of **five cascading choices**, revisited continually, with the customer as “boss” and ruthless focus on where to play and how to win.

FRAMEWORK

Discipline	In practice at scale
Make the choices explicit	Force where-to-play and how-to-win decisions
Put the customer first	“The consumer is boss” guides every choice
Focus	Win where you choose to play; decline the rest
Revisit the logic	Treat strategy as a living set of choices

METHODOLOGY

A practitioner account grounded in two large corporate turnarounds.

SIGNIFICANCE AND CRITIQUE

Proof-of-practice that the choice cascade works at scale. The critique: it is a single-company narrative, best read alongside Martin's framework.

Martin Reeves *Your Strategy Needs a Strategy, 2015*

Strategy palette · BCG Henderson Institute

CORE THESIS

There is **no single right way to do strategy**. The right approach depends on the environment – how **predictable** it is, how far you can **shape** it, and how **harsh** it is. Match the approach to the environment, and avoid using one style everywhere.

FRAMEWORK

Approach	Fits an environment that is...
Classical	Predictable, hard to change – analyse, plan, position
Adaptive	Unpredictable, hard to change – experiment and iterate fast
Visionary	Predictable, you can change it – be first, create it
Shaping	Unpredictable, you can change it – orchestrate an ecosystem
Renewal	Harsh – conserve, then pivot to one of the above

METHODOLOGY

Empirical research relating strategy approaches to environmental conditions.

SIGNIFICANCE AND CRITIQUE

A meta-framework that unifies the strategy schools by context – unusually useful for an operator choosing how to approach a given situation. The critique: it is recent, and its categories can blur at the edges.

Synthesis

Contribution	Strategy as...	Key tool	Register
Kim & Mauborgne	Market creation	Value innovation; ERRC	Popular / actionable
Martin	A cascade of choices	Where to play / how to win	Practitioner-academic
Lafley	Disciplined choice at scale	The five choices, applied	Practitioner
Reeves	Matched to environment	The strategy palette	Empirical meta-framework

FOR THE OPERATOR

The modern integrative frameworks make strategy usable – creating uncontested space (Kim & Mauborgne), a cascade of where-to-play and how-to-win choices (Martin, proven at scale by Lafley), matched to the environment (Reeves). For the operator: choose the strategy style that fits your environment, make the hard choices explicit, and look for value innovation over head-to-head war. That closes the Strategy Schools series – positioning, resources, emergence and integration – a complete map of how strategy is thought about and done.